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1995/06/23

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Date Printed: 01/09/1997

DOC NUMBER: 95BEIJIN27393

CHANNEL: n/a

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ACTION EAP-01

INFO LOG-00 CA-02 OASY-00 TEDE-00 L-01 ADS-00 OCS-06
ONLY-00 SSO-00 /010W

O 230946Z JUN 95
FM AMEMBASSY BEIJING
TO AMEMBASSY BISHKEK IMMEDIATE
SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8864
AMEMBASSY ALMATY IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

S E C R E T BEIJING 027393

DEPT FOR EAP/CM, CA/OCS/ACS/EAP AND L/EAP

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: CASC, PHUM, CH
SUBJECT: WHEREABOUTS REQUEST -- POLITICAL ACTIVIST HARRY
WU

REF: STATE 151840

1. SECRET ENTIRE TEXT.

2. AT APPROXIMATELY 10 AM BEIJING TIME ON JUNE 23, PRIOR TO THE RECEIPT OF REFTEL, THE EMBASSY RECEIVED A PHONE CALL FROM A LOW RANKING OFFICIAL OF THE FOURTH DIVISION OF THE CONSULAR DEPARTMENT CONCERNING PETER H. WU AND

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SUE HOWELL. THE CALL WAS TAKEN BY A LOCAL EMPLOYEE AND
WAS QUITE UNCLEAR.

3. APPARENTLY WU AND HOWELL ATTEMPTED TO ENTER THE PRC ON OR ABOUT THE 19TH OF JUNE AT A LAND BORDER CROSSING IN XINJIANG DESCRIBED AS HUO ER GUO ST WHICH DOES NOT APPEAR

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ON MOST MAPS BUT WHICH PROBABLY IS ON THE ROAD, SUCH AS IT IS, BETWEEN ALMATY AND URUMQI. THE CALLER INDICATED THAT THERE HAD BEEN SOME QUESTION AS TO THE VALIDITY OF THE TRAVELLERS' DOCUMENTS AND VISAS AND AN INVESTIGATION WAS UNDERTAKEN. THE CHINESE OFFICIAL ALSO STATED THAT THE INVESTIGATION WITH RESPECT TO HOWELL WAS "CONCLUDED." NO FURTHER INFORMATION WAS PROVIDED.

4. WE HAVE COMMENCED LOW-KEY INQUIRIES TO DEVELOP MORE INFORMATION BUT AS YET DO NOT KNOW WHETHER EITHER TRAVELLER WAS, OR IS STILL, DETAINED, OR WHETHER EITHER OR BOTH WERE ADMITTED OR DENIED ENTRY TO THE PRC. WITHOUT SERIOUSLY COMPROMISING WU'S IDENTITY WE CANNOT PRESS MUCH HARDER FOR INFORMATION BUT WE WILL CONTINUE TO PURSUE THIS WITH THE CHINESE AS IF IT WERE SIMPLY A ROUTINE WELFARE AND WHEREABOUTS CASE. AS PRC GOVERNMENT OFFICES NO LONGER WORK ON SATURDAYS, WE DO NOT EXPECT TO HAVE FURTHER INFORMATION UNTIL MONDAY, JUNE 26. WE WILL REPORT ALL RESULTS OF OUR INQUIRIES IMMEDIATELY.

5. COMMENT: THE PHONE CALL FROM THE MFA CONSULAR DEPARTMENT WAS UNUSUAL BUT NOT UNPRECEDENTED. IT MAY BE SIGNIFICANT THAT ONLY HOWELL'S CASE WAS DESCRIBED AS HAVING BEEN "CONCLUDED." HALLFORD

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a
*** Current Classification *** SECRET